



# BE BEARWISE

## OUTDOOR SAFETY TIPS

Black bears are seldom aggressive and rarely injure people. Follow these BearWise tips to avoid encounters.



### Hiking and Walking

- Be aware of your surroundings.
- Try not to hike alone.
- Keep kids within sight and close by.
- Make noise periodically so bears in the area can avoid you.
- **Keep dogs leashed at all times or leave them at home.** Don't force a bear to defend itself.
- Double bag your food and pack out all food and trash. *Leaving scraps, wrappers, or "harmless" items like apple cores teaches bears to associate trails and campsites with food.*



### If You Encounter a Black Bear

- **If you see a bear before it notices you,** don't approach. Stand still, enjoy the moment, then quietly move away.
- **If a bear sees you,** back away slowly. Never run. Running may trigger a chase response.
- **If a bear approaches,** hold your ground, wave your arms, and yell "Hey bear!" until it leaves. Always stay with your group. **If the bear keeps approaching,** use bear spray.
- **If a black bear makes contact with you,** do NOT play dead. Instead, fight back aggressively.



### Fishing and Hunting



- You are more likely to encounter bears when moving quietly and when traveling early and late in the day.
- Follow tips for hiking and camping safely.
- Harvested animals and fishing bait may attract bears.
- If a bear beats you to your catch or kill, don't try to reclaim it. Leave the area when it is safe to do so.

### Cycling and Jogging

- If you travel quickly or quietly, you can easily surprise bears. Music and phones are distracting. Stay aware of your surroundings and make noise periodically.

### Camping



- Keep a clean camp.
- Don't burn food scraps or trash in your fire ring or grill.
- **Do not store food, trash, clothes worn when cooking, or toiletries in your tent.** Store in approved bear-resistant containers OR out of sight in a locked vehicle OR suspended at least 10 feet above the ground and 10 feet from any part of the tree. *Local storage regulations vary.*
- Cook downwind and as far from your tent as possible.
- Set up backcountry camps away from dense cover and natural food sources.



Learn more at  
**BEARWISE.ORG**



Black bear is a species. Their colors include black, brown, and cinnamon.

Helping People Live Responsibly with Black Bears

BearWise® CREATED BY BEAR BIOLOGISTS,  
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